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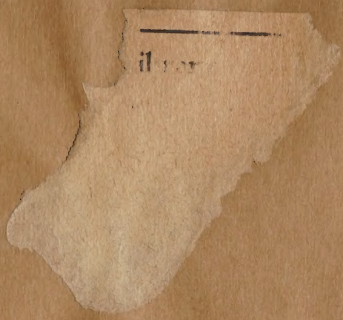

IS SPIRITUALISM TRUE?

7609a.6

BY

WILLIAM DENTON.

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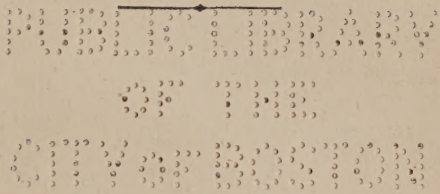

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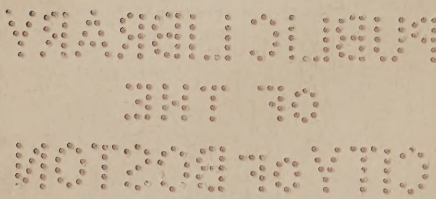

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IS SPIRITUALISM TRUE?

It is useless to tell us that a doctrine is popular. Paganism was once more popular than Presbyterianism; the world to-day would have been flat as a table, if the belief of a majority could have made it so. "But our doctrines are old: they have stood for eighteen hundred years." If such an argument is good for any thing, it overturns all Protestantism, and establishes Catholicism in its place; for Protestantism is only a protest against Catholicism, which must, therefore, be the older. But Buddhism, which was established twenty-five hundred years ago, says to Catholicism, "Out, you baby of yesterday!" but, scarcely seats itself in the temple, before it is unceremoniously ejected by hoary Paganism, the son of the ages.

For a doctrine to commend itself to the thinkers of the nineteenth century it must be true. It matters not whether one or one million believe it; whether it is declared by the beggar, whose shivering body the rags but miserably protect, or comes from heaven with a voice of thunder and the answering response of archangels. The only significant question that we can ask is, Is it true? If not, God himself cannot save it from the perdition that awaits it.

Is Spiritualism true? What is Spiritualism? It is not a belief in the writings of Andrew Jackson Davis. It is not an indorsement of the manifestations that are said to occur through the Davenports, or Eddys, Miss Ellis, or Mrs. Blair; nor is it to believe all that is published in "The Banner of Light," or declared by the thousands of mediums who speak in the name of the departed throughout the land. Whatever truth there may be in them, I object to making Spiritualism responsible for all these things, many of which can only be known to be true by examinations that one may have neither time nor ability to make, and that the parties concerned are sometimes unable, and sometimes unwilling, to permit.

What is Spiritualism, then? Webster gives the following definition of it: "Spiritualism is a belief in the frequent communication of intelligence from the world of spirits, by means of physical phenomena commonly manifested through a person of susceptibility, called a 'medium.'" A better, because a more accurate definition is, "Spiritualism is a belief in the communication of intelligence from the spirits of the departed, commonly obtained through a person of susceptibility, called a 'medium.'"

The spirit is something that exists when the body dies; but, since we see nothing depart, it is invisible; it communicates, according to our definition, with the living; it has, then, organs by which its communications are made: hence Spiritualism is first a belief that man possesses a spirit (the unseen man) that is not bound by the limitation of the senses, but can see without using the bodily eye, hear when no sound is conveyed to the outward ear, and can travel without

the body's organs of locomotion. Does man possess such a spirit? If he does, we may reasonably expect to find some evidence of it in the present condition of existence, as we see in the egg before it is hatched the undeveloped wings that are eventually to be used in flying. If man is to see in the future, when the eye has become dust, we may expect to find some indication of it while he is still in the body; and this we do.

The writers of the famous Atkinson and Martineau Letters (Dr. Atkinson and Harriet Martineau) fearlessly announce in them (and I admire their honesty and boldness), that they are atheists, and have no faith in man's existence after death;* and yet they present us with facts that establish, I think, the existence in man of something altogether distinct from the body, and that can obtain knowledge without using the ordinary senses. I quote from them, because testimony in reference to this question coming from such a source is particularly valuable; their opinions giving them no bias in the direction of belief in such facts, but rather the contrary.

Dr. Atkinson says, "I had once a very remarkable patient, a somnambule, who, with the eyes closed, could easily read any writing I gave her. She read it from the top of her head, or when placed in her hand, or, in fact, from any part of her body; and it was to be noticed, in this case, that, the more tightly you pressed upon her eyes, the more clearly she could see." Dr. Atkinson adds, "This was a young lady staying with my mother and sisters; and I may say, that no one, however scepti-

* I am glad to learn, since this was written, that Harriet Martineau has become convinced of man's future existence.

cal, doubted *clairvoyance* after seeing this case. The clear evidence and daylight facts were too strong for scepticism itself." *

Instead of seeing with her eyes, then, the more unfavorably her eyes were situated for seeing, and the more readily she could see.

So satisfied of clairvoyance had he become, that he says, "I have heard men say, 'We are men of facts, and do not believe in *clairvoyance*.' I have replied, 'You are not men of facts, or, at least, not of these facts. You are like machines which spin out only one kind of fabric. You are men of one language and one country; prisoners with a window to the north, and declare there is no moon.'" † A class of prisoners of which there are not a few in our own country.

This making the circle of a man's knowledge the boundary of the universe has been altogether too common; and even Carlyle and Emerson, men of uncommon ability in many directions, have shown themselves very circumscribed in this respect, sneering at that which they have never or very slightly investigated.

It is no wonder that Dr. Atkinson speaks so confidently on the subject of clairvoyance; for he is a clairvoyant himself. He says, "One evening, I saw very distinctly, when a few steps from my door, two letters on my table, and from the same person. 'Now,' I thought, 'this will show me that these perceptions are crude fancies;' for I had received a letter from the same person the day before, and it was out of all probability that there should be two more letters from the same person, by the same post. On entering the room,

* Atkinson and Martineau Letters, p. 104. † Ibid. p. p. 153.

there were the two letters, sure enough, and lying precisely as I had seen them; and I must say it made me start, for this I could not suppose to be a coincidence." *

What was this which saw the two letters on his table, when he was several steps from the door, so that he knew how they lay, and whom they were from? Certainly we have no knowledge of the bodily senses possessing such power. I think we shall see, in the light of accumulated facts, that, in this case, the spirit-eyes beheld the letters, — these eyes that can see through a brick wall as readily as through air, and a hundred miles off as distinctly as at twelve inches.

However unlikely that it should be, some would account for this by coincidence: "He happened to think of two letters from that person at that time, and it happened to be so; that is all." Such an explanation cannot, however, be given in the following cases: "Dr. Gregory, professor of chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, tells us that Major Buckley has produced conscious clairvoyance in eighty-nine persons; of whom forty-four have been able to read mottoes contained in nut-shells purchased by other parties for the experiment. The longest motto thus read contained ninety-eight words. Many subjects will read motto after motto without one mistake. In this way, the mottoes contained in four thousand eight hundred and sixty nut-shells have been read, some of them, indeed, by persons in the mesmeric sleep, but most of them by persons in the conscious state, many of whom have never been put to sleep. In boxes, upward

* Atkinson and Martineau Letters, p. 110.

of thirty-six thousand words have been read; in one paper, three hundred and seventy-one words. Including those who have read words contained in boxes when in the sleep, one hundred and forty-eight persons have thus read. In a few cases, the words may have been read by thought-reading, as the persons who put them in the boxes were present; but, in most cases, no one who knew the words has been present, and they must, therefore, have been read by direct clairvoyance. The nuts enclosing mottoes, for example, have been purchased of forty different confectioners, and have been sealed up till read." *

Dr. Ashburner of London, not trusting to the nutshells furnished by the major, purchased some himself, and these were read by the clairvoyants with accuracy. † He also says, "Delicately sensitive persons have, in my presence, read printed words and sentences on slips of paper, previously concealed from them carefully in another apartment, in the innermost of a nest of four silver boxes, all enclosed in a morocco case, or folded up in nutshells."

"All that is done by mind-reading," says one. But, where the mottoes were sealed up till read, this appears to be impossible; and, in the following case given by Dr. Gregory, it was manifestly impossible, for the individual who supposed he knew the word was mistaken, and the clairvoyant right.

"On one occasion, Sir T. Willshire took home a nest of boxes belonging to the major, and placed in the inner box a paper on which he had written a word. He sealed up the boxes in paper, and asked one of the

* Gregory's Letters on Animal Magnetism, p. 302.

† Ashburner's Animal Magnetism and Spiritualism, p. 271

clairvoyants to read it. She said she saw the word 'concert.' He declared that she was wrong, though right with regard to the first and last letters. She persisted that it was 'concert;' and, opening the boxes, it was found that she was correct, the baronet having forgotten the word." *

Rev. Chauncey H. Townshend tells us of a young man, E. A——, whom he mesmerized, and took into a perfectly dark closet, when, he says, "I drew a card at hazard from a pack with which I had provided myself, and presented to him. He said it was so and so. The admission of light established his correctness: it was the card he had named. The experiment repeated four times gave the same satisfactory result. He used to declare, that, the more complete the darkness was, the better he could exercise his new mode of perception." †

Such evidence as this might be considered sufficient to establish the fact of clairvoyance; but extraordinary evidence is needed to establish extraordinary facts.

In 1825, Dr. Foissac demanded of the Royal Academy of Medicine in Paris, that a commission should be appointed to examine the claims of animal magnetism. Nine men of learning, several of whom had European reputations, were appointed, and after five years published their report. In this report they state that animal magnetism may produce somnambulic sleep; that some sleepers can see with their eyes closed, can foretell accurately, even months in advance, the time of the access of epileptic fits, or the time of their cure;

* Gregory's Letters on Animal Magnetism, p. 272.

† Townshend's Facts in Animal Magnetism, p. 244.

and can discover the diseases of persons with whom they are placed in magnetic connection.*

Baron Reichenbach, the well-known chemist, and author of the "Dynamics of Magnetism," says that high sensitives in the somnambulic condition, when they have their eyes closed, perceive the forms and colors of the external world, and in the same manner they can look into the human body.

Dr. Colby of Stanstead, Canada, informed me that he had a patient who was so good a clairvoyant, that she read for him a paper just taken from the press, with her eyes bandaged, and a tea-tray between her eyes and the paper.

There are but few who have investigated mesmeric or psychometric phenomena, who have not had opportunities of seeing clairvoyant phenomena. "Vision," says M. Teste, "through the closed eyelids, and through opaque bodies, is not only a real fact, but a very *frequent* fact. There is no magnetizer who has not observed it twenty times; and I know at the present day, in Paris alone, a very great number of somnambulists who might furnish proofs of it." † I have had very frequent opportunities of observing the exercise of this power, both in mesmeric and psychometric subjects.

It is evident that the eye is not necessary to enable some persons to see; and the reason appears to be, that the indwelling spirit, although ordinarily dependent upon the senses for its knowledge of the exterior world, is not confined to them. It can see by other portions of the body as well as by the eyes, hear by the

* New American Cyclopædia, art. "Animal Magnetism."

† Quoted by Bush in Mesmer and Swedenborg, p. 107.

fingers as well as by the ears, and can both see and hear when it appears impossible that any portion of the body can be influenced by what is seen and heard.

Dr. Mayo, professor of comparative anatomy in the Royal College of Surgeons, London, relates several instances of such phenomena. He says, "The psychical phenomena exhibited by the patient when thus entranced are the following: The organs of sensation are deserted by their natural sensibility. The patient neither feels with the skin, nor sees with the eyes, nor hears with the ears, nor tastes with the mouth. All these senses, however, are not lost. Sight and hearing, if not smell and taste, re-appear in some other part, — at the pit of the stomach, for instance, or the tips of the fingers.

"The patient manifests new perceptive powers. She discerns objects all around her, and through any obstructions, partitions, walls, or houses, and at an indefinite distance. She sees her own inside, as it were, illuminated, and can tell what is wrong in the health of others." *

Dr. Gregory says, "The clairvoyant power has been observed to be located in the pit of the stomach, in the tips of the fingers, in the occiput as well as in the forehead, or on the top of the head. . . . In one form or other, the power of dispensing with the eyes, and yet perceiving color, &c., quite plainly, is found in every good subject.

"The same thing frequently happens in hearing. Thus E., when on her travelling state or stage, is utterly deaf to all sounds save those which are addressed

* Popular Superstitions, p. 121.

to her by speaking with the mouth in contact with the tips of her fingers. This fact I have myself verified." *

Dr. Mayo relates the following on the authority of Baron de Fortis. The patient had epilepsy, for the cure of which she went to Aix. "There she had all sorts of fits and day-somnambulism, during which she waited at table, with her eyes shut perfectly. She likewise saw alternately with her fingers, the palm of her hand, and her elbow, and would write with precision with the right hand, superintending the process with her left elbow." In explanation of such phenomena, Dr. Mayo says, "The possibility of an abnormal relation of the mind and body, allowing the former either to shift the place of its manifestations in the nervous system, or partially to energize as free spirit, is the only principle which at present offers any solution of the new powers displayed in catalepsy." † And I think this explanation is the true one.

"But is it not possible that the brain has the power of receiving sensations by other than the ordinary channels, and that it is the brain, after all, by which this is accomplished, and not a spirit behind or within the man?"

It is well that this question should be asked, and the reasons given for regarding the spirit as the agent, and not the brain. "During sleep," says Dr. Hammond, "the brain is in a comparatively bloodless condition, and the blood in the encephalic vessels is not only diminished in quantity, but moves with diminished rapidity." ‡ If the brain is the agent concerned in

* Gregory's Letters on Animal Magnetism, p. 148.
† Popular Superstitions, p. 130.
‡ Sleep and its Derangements, p. 35.

clairvoyant and clairaudient phenomena, its power being very much reduced by sleep, we should naturally expect that sleep would decrease or destroy its ability in this direction: but the very opposite seems to be the case; for many who possess no clairvoyant power in the waking condition have, in sleep, a remarkable development of it.

William Howitt relates the following case, which is also given by Mayo. In December, 1848, Mr. Smith, gardener to Sir Clifford Constable, disappeared; but his hat and stick were found near the River Tees. The river was dragged daily, but to no purpose. One night, a person named Awde, living at Little Newsham, dreamed that Smith was laid under the ledge of a certain rock about three hundred yards below Whorlton Bridge, and that his right arm was broken. He got up early the next morning, and determined to search the river. On arriving at the boat-house, he told the boatman his object, on being asked for what purpose he wished the boat. He rowed to the spot he had seen in his dream, and pulled up the body of the man with the boat-hook, on the first trial, with his right arm actually broken.* There is no intimation given, that Mr. Awde possessed any clairvoyant power in his waking state.

Similar instances might be given, for they are by no means rare (some I shall give in another connection), that seem to prove that the brain, which, as is now well known, is contracted in sleep, and therefore less fitted for obtaining ideas, cannot be the agent in clairvoyance, but it must be the all-seeing spirit.

* Ennemoser's History of Magic, p. 417.

Mesmerism induces, generally, a state of still deeper sleep than the ordinary, and therefore less fitted for the action of the brain; and yet in just that proportion does it seem to be favorable for the exercise of clairvoyance and its accompanying phenomena; and when the deepest sleep is secured by magnetism, and the eye is no longer sensitive to light, the ear to sound, and the skin to touch, it is then that these peculiar powers are most frequently and clearly manifested, as nearly all writers on mesmerism testify.

When approaching death enfeebles all the body's powers, then the permeating spirit asserts its true nature, most strong when the body is most weak.

The Rev. Hare Townshend gives us an instance of this. Chevalier Filippi of Milan informed him of a patient of his who had an abscess, and whom, on visiting, he found had but a few hours to live. Leaving the sick-chamber, he shut the door, and passed through two other rooms, the doors of which he also carefully shut, and entered an apartment where some friends of the patient were assembled. To these he said, speaking in a low tone, "The Signor Valdrighi is much worse. He cannot possibly survive till morning." Scarcely had he uttered the words, when the patient's bell was heard to ring violently, and soon after a servant summoned the doctor back again. "Why did you deceive me?" exclaimed the dying man: "I heard every word you said just now in the farther apartment." He then repeated to the astonished physician the very words he had made use of.* How, otherwise, can such facts be explained, than as evidences of man's

* Townshend's Facts in Animal Magnetism, p. 321.

possession of a spirit whose powers are altogether superior to those of the body ?

The fact that one person can read the thoughts of another, no word being spoken, and no communication given, most persons conversant with mesmerism are familiar with. I have sometimes heard people say, when attempting to explain remarkable mesmeric or spiritual phenomena, "Oh, well! that is thought-reading." But what, pray, is thought-reading? Can we imagine any thing more remarkable? In ordinary clairvoyance, objects that the eye might behold are seen; but in thought-reading that is done which no bodily sense can accomplish, unless it is some sense of which as yet we know nothing.

Dr. Mayo says, "Presently, if his trance-faculties continue to be developed, the entranced person enters into communication with the entire mind of the mesmerizer. His apprehension seems to penetrate the brain of the latter, and is capable of reading all his thoughts." *

Dr. Gregory says, "The sleeper, being placed *en rapport* with any person, can often describe with the greatest accuracy the subject that occupies the thoughts of that person. It may be an absent friend, or his own house, or that of another, or his drawing-room, bedroom, study, &c., — all these things the sleeper perceives as they pass through the mind of the experimenter, and describes with great minuteness and accuracy. . . . He perceives things once known to, and now forgotten by, the experimenter." †

Townshend relates that a lady, wishing to test a mes-

* Popular Superstitions, p. 177.

† Letters on Animal Magnetism, pp. 108, 109.

meric subject of his, was about to choose two cards from a number lying upon the table, and then ask him to discover which they were. She had chosen the cards by her eye only, in perfect silence, and standing behind the subject, when he exclaimed, "Why should I go through this farce? I know already the two cards which the lady thought of: they were so and so." He was perfectly right. *

But what is this that reads thoughts? Certainly not the eye, and assuredly no other known sense. Can it be the brain, destitute of all organs for that purpose? Can it be other than the spirit, exercising those powers which it will constantly employ when released from the body? Within us all these wondrous powers lie as

> "The wings that form
> The butterfly lie folded in the worm."

Were it not, however, for other and more convincing evidence of the spirit's existence and operation, we might still refer all these cases to the operation of some occult power in the body yet to be discovered. But the persons through whom such phenomena are manifested, frequently have the sensation of being distinct from the body, of even looking down upon it, of travelling to distant localities, and returning again to the body. All who have experimented much in mesmerism are familiar with this; and evidence on this subject is quite voluminous. Dr. Mayo says, "These more complicated cases prove that the clairvoyant actually pays a mental visit to the scene. But she can do more: she can pass on to other and remoter scenes

* Townshend's Facts in Animal Magnetism, p. 447.

and places of which her fellow-traveller has no cognizance." *

Thomas C. Hartshorn, a well-known magnetizer, writing many years ago for "The Providence Journal," says of a friend whom he had magnetized, "I can send him forth instantly through the thick darkness of night into distant lands, and cause him to bring us tidings of our absent friends. His spirit seems to delight in this activity: his intellectual countenance brightens up with various emotions. He glides along the surface of the earth and ocean as rapid as the lambent borealis; and ever and anon, as different scenes arrest his attention, he bursts out into involuntary exclamations of pleasure or surprise, of joy or sorrow." This is no exaggeration, as my own experience with clairvoyants has repeatedly demonstrated. Before the advent of modern Spiritualism, I had, on numerous occasions, sent mesmeric subjects on distant journeys, and obtained from them knowledge of events then transpiring, as subsequent inquiries proved, — events absolutely unknown to all others present, and of such a character that they could not be guessed.

Mr. Hartshorn again says, "That the human spirit hath power to leave the body, and take cognizance of things distant in space, is but an elementary truth in this branch of psychology."

Dr. Cleaveland of Providence gives the following statement, made to him by a carpenter, who fell from the staging of a building to the ground. "As I struck the ground," said he, "I suddenly bounded up, seeming to have a new body, and to be standing among the

* Popular Superstitions, p. 191.

spectators, looking at my old one. I saw them trying to bring it to. I made several fruitless efforts to re-enter my body, and finally succeeded."

Mr. Moore of Malden, an officer in the Charlestown navy-yard, informed me, that, when fifteen years of age, he fell in climbing a lamp-post; and his head struck the curb-stone of the street with such violence as to fracture his skull. He instantly found himself out of his body, and looking down upon it; but in a few minutes, with a struggle, was able to return to ordinary consciousness.

Sensations similar to these have been frequently experienced by intelligent and reliable persons with whom I have conversed; and I know of no way in which they can be accounted for save by acknowledging that man does possess a spirit having organs of sensation.

John O. Wattles of Kansas, well known in the West as one of the most eloquent and earnest laborers in the antislavery cause at a time when to be such was to be ostracised, informed me, that, on one occasion, he accidentally discovered that his spirit could leave the body, and return. He found, afterward, that this could be done at will; and he frequently looked down as a spectator upon his body lying in a death-like trance, and then roamed at pleasure over the earth, and returned again.

Psychometers have frequently the power to do this; yet the body, in their case, presents no apparent difference from its ordinary condition. Mrs. Cridge, Mrs. Denton, and my son Sherman, travel spiritually with great ease, and describe with great accuracy distant localities never visited by them, and sometimes un-

known to all persons present. They describe themselves as being there, to all appearance, in the body, so that they can see its different parts; the spiritual body being as real to spiritual sight as the physical body is to the physical eye, and quite as much so to the touch. They can hear, see, feel, taste, smell, and, in short, exercise every sense, much more perfectly than if present in the body: and this I have known psychometers to express hundreds of times; several independent psychometers, knowing nothing of the experience of others, giving exactly similar statements.

Lydia Maria Child has just published the following statement regarding her deceased friend Henrietta Sargent. "One morning, she spoke of not feeling as well as usual; but it was regarded by herself and others as merely a slight deviation from her customary good health. But in the course of the day she suddenly fainted away. As the usual restoratives produced no effect, the family physician was summoned. No better success attended his efforts. The breath appeared to be entirely suspended, and the limbs remained rigid and cold. Her daughters feared she must be dead; and the doctor began to be doubtful whether animation would ever be restored. How long she continued in this state, I do not remember. But, while they were watching her with ever-deepening anxiety, she gasped feebly, and, after a while, opened her eyes. When she had completely recovered, she told her daughters she had been standing by them all the time, looking upon her lifeless body, and seeing all they did to resuscitate it; and she astonished them by repeating the minutest details of all that had been said or done by them and the doctor during her prolonged state of utter insensibility."

Dr. Kerner relates of the Seeress of Prevorst: "On the 28th of May, 1827, at midnight, when I was with her, she again saw herself sitting on a stool. . . . She tried to cry out, but could neither speak nor move. . . . The image ran towards her; and, just as it reached her, a sort of electric shock passed over her which I saw: she then uttered a scream, and related to me what she had seen." In this case, the body appears to have seen the spirit; in all cases with which I have been conversant, the spirit has seen the body or seen itself. All these facts, however, like converging rays, point to the grand luminous truth from which they proceed, — the possession by man of a spirit.

I have noticed that when persons in their ordinary condition have no belief in future existence, yet, when their spiritual faculties are awakened, they realize its truth, and rejoice in the satisfaction that it brings to the soul; and the more highly-developed mesmeric subjects frequently manifest this.

Townshend tells us of a materialistic young Frenchman whom he frequently mesmerized. In his waking condition, he had no faith in future existence, and was not at all backward in declaring it; but, "in sleep-walking," says Townshend, "all this was changed. His ideas of the mind were correct, and singularly opposed to the material views he took of all questions when in the waking state. . . . Beautiful are the things he has said to me respecting the soul's recognition of those it loved on earth, and of the privilege of departed friends to watch over the objects of their solicitude while toiling through the pilgrimage of life." *

* Townshend's Facts in Animal Magnetism, p. 163.

These facts are in no other way related to modern Spiritualism than as evidencesof the existence in Nature of that of which the facts of modern Spiritualism are more recent and fuller illustrations; most of them belong to a time previous to the first Rochester rap.

One or two such facts might be considered of little importance; but together they form a body of evidence that seems to me absolutely irresistible. And, if this is true, the foundation of Spiritualism is true. Man is not merely an animated clod, to lie down with his fellow-clods, and know no more than they. We do not see all there is of him: he has a wondrous body, but a vastly more wondrous spirit, to which no night is dark, no body opaque; no distance can baffle its gaze, no bodily sense limit its knowledge. It is the true man, and the body but its incasement, — the shell, only useful till the spirit is plumed for its flight.

Then the materialist and the adventist are alike wrong. The materialist sees but the surface of things, knows nothing of the all-controlling spirit within, yet makes his knowledge the boundary of the universe. The adventist calls in miracle where it is altogether unnecessary. Man *is* a spirit: he is not to become one. Nature knows no favored saints, who are to be spiritually created for the barbarous heaven of a half-Jewish, half-Christian mythology, while the rest are left to sink into nonentity; but she has given to all freely as life, light, and air, that spirit which can smile at death, and soar triumphant when the lifeless body sinks to the dust.

Spiritualism also includes the belief that *this spirit lives when the body dies.* Accept the first, and there is little difficulty in believing the second. If

man has a spirit that can see without using the eyes of the body; see even when these eyes do not exist, or are incapable of vision, as in the case of blind somnambulists and clairvoyants, — it is not unreasonable to suppose that it may see when its connection with the body is entirely destroyed by death. If he has a spirit that can hear sounds that are made hundreds of miles away from the body, and thus independent of the body's ears, it is not unreasonable to suppose that it may continue to hear when the body and all its organs are abandoned by the spirit, and the dust claims its kindred dust. And why may not the spirit, which has demonstrated its independence so clearly of all the body's faculties, continue to manifest its powers, though the body be no more? Why should we possess faculties all but unused, or used by but one in ten thousand? Why these spiritual eyes, if we are never to use them? Why these ears that hear so little, and yet have such wonderful capacity? Why this ability to travel more rapidly than light, if death is to destroy it when it has so seldom been employed? There is a physical body, and there is a spiritual body; and, in the light of facts, it is most reasonable to believe that the spiritual body will live when the physical body dies.

I can imagine two worms just folded in their cocoons arguing the question whether there is to be any future life for them. "I have an idea," says one, "that I shall fly when I have eaten my way out of this case in which I am enclosed." — "You fly!" says the other: "that is all nonsense. You are a worm; and your life has been spent in crawling on the ground, for which alone all your faculties are fitted. Whoever saw worms fly? Worms we are, and worms we must ever be, and

are now shut up in what must, in the nature of things, be our grave." — "But what are these wings for? I can feel wings that are growing on my sides; and I am persuaded that they are to be used. I shall fly, and, in the summer's sun of another year, flit from flower to flower, and enjoy the beauty of the bright world." And the hopeful worm is right. And we say, "What are these spiritual faculties for? They are our wings; and there is a realm where they are to be exercised during a life that only truly commences after what we call death."

As an evidence of this, let us again refer to sleep. If the spirit ceases to exist when the body dies, it is but reasonable to suppose that it will be influenced by the condition of the body in life; so that, when the body is in the most unfavorable condition for receiving knowledge through the senses, the spirit will likewise be in an equally unfavorable condition for receiving knowledge: but if the spirit is to survive death, and exercise its powers when it is separated from the body, we may reasonably expect that it will be able to manifest these powers when the ordinary senses are locked in sleep; and this we find to be the case. Sleep closes the eye and prevents vision, contracts the brain, reduces the circulation, and deadens the general sensibility: and yet the spirit in this condition can see what the open eye could not perceive; it reveals what it has tortured the brain for days in vain to discover; it visits distant lands, and beholds the succession of passing events in which the individual is interested, and sometimes even those in which he takes no special interest.

Dr. Carpenter relates, that Condorcet saw in his dreams the final steps of a difficult calculation which

had puzzled him during the day; and Condillac states, that, when engaged with his "Course of Study," he frequently developed and finished a subject in his dreams which he had broken off before retiring to rest. Can it be the brain that does this in sleep, when it has been unable to accomplish it in the waking state? We might as well suppose a man could run eight miles an hour with his feet shackled, while he could only run four when they were free.

Chambers, in an essay on sleep, says, "A distinguished divine of the present day, who in his college-days, was devoted to mathematical studies, was once baffled for several days by a difficult problem, which he finally solved in his sleep." If you say, all this, however, the brain might do, stimulated into unusual activity by the waking desires, there are numerous cases that cannot be so explained.

In "The Penny Encyclopædia," article "Dreams," I find the following, "In the night of the 11th of May, 1812, Mr. Williams of Scorrior House, near Redruth in Cornwall, awoke his wife, and, exceedingly agitated, told her that he had dreamed that he was in the lobby of the House of Commons, and saw a man shoot with a pistol a gentleman who had just entered the lobby, who was said to be the chancellor; to which Mrs. Williams replied, that it was only a dream, and recommended him to go to sleep as soon as he could. He did so; but, shortly after, he again awoke her, and said that he had a second time had the same dream. The same vision was repeated a third time; on which, notwithstanding his wife's entreaties that he would lie quiet, and endeavor to forget it, he arose (then between one and two o'clock) and dressed himself. At break-

fast, the dreams were the sole subject of conversation; and in the forenoon Mr. Williams went to Falmouth, where he related the particulars of them to all of his acquaintances that he met. On the following day, Mr. Tucker of Trematon Castle, accompanied by his wife, (a daughter of Mr. Williams), went to Scorrior House on a visit. Mr. Williams related to Mr. Tucker the circumstance of his dreams; on which Mr. Tucker observed, that it would do very well for a dream to have the chancellor in the lobby of the House of Commons, but that he would not be found there in reality. Mr. Tucker then asked what sort of a man he appeared to be, when Mr. Williams described him minutely. Mr. Tucker replied, 'Your description is not at all that of the chancellor, but is very exactly that of Mr. Perceval, the chancellor of the exchequer.' He then inquired whether Mr. Williams had ever seen Mr. Perceval, and was told that he had never seen him, nor had he ever had any thing to do with him; and, further, that he had never been in the House of Commons in his life. At this moment they heard a horse gallop to the door of the house; and immediately after a son of Mr. Williams entered the room, and said that he had galloped out from Truro, having seen a gentleman there who had come by that evening's mail from town, and who had been in the lobby of the House of Commons on the evening of the 11th, when a man called Bellingham had shot Mr. Perceval (the chancellor of the exchequer). After the astonishment which this intelligence created had a little subsided, Mr. Williams described most minutely the appearance and dress of the man that he saw in his dream fire the pistol at the chancellor, as also of the chancellor. About six

weeks after, Mr. Williams, having business in town, went, accompanied by a friend, to the House of Commons, where, as has been already observed, he had never before been. Immediately that he came to the steps at the entrance of the lobby, he said, 'This place is as distinctly within my recollection as any room in my house;' and he made the same observation when he entered the lobby. He then pointed out the exact spot where Bellingham stood when he fired, and which Mr. Perceval had reached when he was struck by the ball when he fell. The dress both of Mr. Perceval and Bellingham agreed with the description given by Mr. Williams, even to the minutest particulars. The dream is related by Dr. Abercrombie with some additional circumstances."

Mr. Williams obtained in sleep knowledge, that, even in the waking state, he could not have obtained; and sleep, instead of diminishing the spirit's power, vastly increased it, showing its independence of the body's condition.

"A respected correspondent of Mr. F.," says Chambers in his "Essay on Dreams," "was a man of exemplary piety and the strictest veracity. He was in the East-India Company's service, and, having served one and twenty years, was about to return to his native country on leave of absence for three years. Some nights before his departure from Calcutta, he had a dream that his father died. It was so vivid, and so minutely circumstantial, that it made a very deep impression on him; and he entered all the particulars and the date into his pocket-book. In about six months after, on his arrival in London, he found letters from Ireland, where his family resided, waiting for him.

They announced the death of his father, which had occurred on *the very night of his dream*. This was so singular, that, when he joined his sister a few days after, he desired her to enter into no particulars relative to his father's death till she should hear him. 'Sarah,' said he, 'I believe that my father did not die in his own room: his bed was in the parlor.' — 'It was, it was, indeed,' replied she: 'he had it brought down a short time after he was taken ill, to save him the fatigue of going up and down stairs.' — 'I will show you the spot where it was placed,' said Capt. F. He immediately pointed out the situation of the bed, exactly where it had been. He showed where the coffin had been laid. There was nothing connected with the melancholy event which he could not detail as minutely as those who had actually been present. Strange as all this may appear, it is nevertheless perfectly true. I have frequently heard it from Capt. F. himself, and from his wife and sister."

The Pacific Hotel in St. Louis was destroyed by fire in February, 1858, and twenty-one lives were lost. On the night of the fire, a little brother of Mr. Henry Rochester, living at home with his parents, near Avon, N.Y., awoke some time after midnight with screaming and tears, saying that the hotel in St. Louis was on fire, and that his brother Henry was burning to death. At noon on the following day, his parents received a telegram from St. Louis confirming his dream in every particular.*

There is no evidence that these individuals possessed any clairvoyant power in their waking state; but, as the bodily eye closes, the spiritual eye opens, and when

* Planchette; or, The Despair of Science, p. 168.

the brain and senses are in an eminently unfavorable condition for obtaining knowledge, then knowledge of even distant events is easily and readily obtained by the spirit.

In death-trance, when even the circulation is stopped, and respiration can no longer be perceived, when the pallor of death overspreads the countenance, and death itself is so well counterfeited that it is hardly possible to distinguish the one from the other, the spirit asserts its superiority and independence; it hears, sees, feels, and obtains knowledge, that, out of this trance-state, the individual is unable to obtain.

In "The American Phrenological Journal," I find the following. "A daughter of Mr. Hangley of Bangor, seven years of age, was taken sick of cholera, and, to all appearance, died, but in a few hours stretched forth her arms, and exclaimed, 'O father! I have been to heaven, and it is a beautiful place.' She stated that she saw her mother there, who had died but a few days before, and she was taking care of little children, among whom, she said, were 'four children of Uncle Hangley, and three children of Uncle Casey.' — 'But,' said an older sister, 'it cannot be so; for there are but two of Uncle Casey's children dead.' — 'Yes,' she replied, 'I saw three of them in heaven. All were dressed in white, and all were very happy, and the children playing.' Shortly after, a message came from Mr. Casey in Carmel, giving information of the death of another child, and inviting them to attend the funeral."

The spirit's powers are not weakened by sleep nor death-trance, but vastly increased; just what we should expect if the spirit is to survive death, but altogether inexplicable if death is to extinguish us.

What effect has the approach of death itself? In drowning, when the thread of life has been all but severed, and with the greatest difficulty animation has been restored to the apparently lifeless body, it is well known that the activity of the spirit has been by no means decreased, but often vastly increased.

From a letter by F. Beaufort to Dr. W. Hyde, published in "The American Phrenological Journal," I extract the following. He fell into the water, and says, "From the moment that all exertion had ceased, which, I imagine, was the immediate consequence of complete suffocation, a calm feeling of the most perfect tranquillity superseded the previous tumultuous sensations: it might be called apathy, certainly not resignation; for drowning no longer appeared to be an evil. I no longer thought of being rescued; nor was I in any bodily pain. The senses were deadened; but not so the mind. Its activity seemed to be invigorated in a ratio which defies all description; for thought rose after thought with a rapidity of succession that is not only indescribable, but probably inconceivable by any one who has not been himself in a similar situation. . . . Travelling backward, every past incident of my life seemed to glance at my recollection in retrograde succession; not, however, in mere outline, as here stated, but the picture filled up with every minute and collateral feature: in short, the whole period of my existence seemed to be placed before me in a kind of panoramic review, and each act of it seemed to be accompanied by a consciousness of right or wrong, or by some reflection on its cause or consequences; indeed, many trifling events that had long been forgotten then

crowded into my imagination, and with the character of recent familiarity."

Could the man's body have been examined while this was going on, the surface would have been found cold, the whole of the arterial blood converted into black venous blood, and this distending the heart, the lungs, and the brain, rendering the whole physical man as unfit for action as a locomotive with the fire out, and the water in the boiler changed to ice. If we found a locomotive going at the rate of a thousand miles an hour under such circumstances, we should conclude that it ran by some other motive-power than steam. What remembered, thought, imagined, when the body was in this condition? That which will remember, think, and imagine when the body has returned to dust.

As an evidence of this extraordinary memory in drowning, I present the following, taken from "The Rome Daily Sentinel." A held a bond of B for several hundred dollars, having some time to run. At its maturity, he found that he had put it away so carefully that he could not find it. He called on B, related the circumstance, and proposed to give him a receipt; but B denied owing him any thing, and intimated that A wished to cheat him. Several years passed, when A, bathing in Charles River, sunk, and was completely unconscious before he was rescued. "On the first return of strength to walk, he left his bed, went to his book-case, took out a book, opened it, and handed his long-lost bond to a friend who was present. He then informed him, that when drowning and sinking, as he supposed, to rise no more, in a moment there stood out distinctly before him as a picture every

act of his life, from the hour of childhood to the hour of sinking beneath the water; and among them the circumstance of putting the bond in the book, the book itself, and the place in which he had put it in the book-case."

The spirit apparently forgets nothing, and when released from the body all our past is present to us, — ours forever.

How exceedingly common it is for the dying to see and hear what those present are utterly unconscious of! It is easy to say that they are idle fancies clustering around the dying man, that reason is too weak to dispel. They should at least be in harmony with his previous ideas if this theory of their origin be granted.

A Methodist minister, Purcell P. Hamilton of Litchfield, Ill., near the close of a lingering illness, was entranced. His friends thought him gone; but he unexpectedly revived, and said to his wife, "I have not left you yet. I have been to see my heavenly home; but they told me I could not go until I came back and told you that the teachings of all these years from my pulpit are false. Our ideas of heaven are all wrong. I have taught and thought we would die and go straight to God and glory. All wrong. Tell all you meet my last words to them, — all wrong. The spirit-home is a beautiful land; but we must go up step by step, and work out our own salvation."

It is so common for the dying to be clairvoyant, that, in every age, it has been noticed by the intelligent. Plutarch says in reference to it, "It is not probable, that, in death, the soul gains new powers which it was not before possessed of when the heart was confined with the chains of the body: but it is much more

probable that these powers were always in being, though dimmed and clogged by the body; and the soul is only then able to practise them when the corporeal bonds are loosened, and the drooping limbs and stagnant juices no longer oppress it."

Schiller's last words when dying were, "Many things are growing plain and clear to me." Is this the talk of an expiring soul going down to the grave to come up no more, the night of annihilation closing around it? It is the joyous exclamation of one long living in obscurity, who for the first time finds the windows ajar, and the light of a deathless morn looking in. We dwell in the twilight, and we pine for the glory of a day that must shine.

So far, then, from the approach of death weakening the soul as it does the body, and thus rendering probable its dissolution with the body, it develops its peculiar powers, and prepares the way for their manifestation, and thus gives us the assurance, that, when it is consummated, the spirit will be free to exercise those faculties untrammelled, which are manifested here in their greatest strength when the body is most weak.

If the spirit exists after death, what can be more reasonable than that it should desire to communicate with its friends still in the body? Can the mother forget the family from which death has torn her? the patriot the country for which his life has been spent? the youth the home around which all his associations are clustered? If the emigrant thinks of his country over the sea, and sends messages to those whom he never again expects to see, how much more shall those who have gone to the land of souls remember the loved ones remaining, and desire to give them tidings of their welfare!

Can it be done? Dr. Gregory says, "I can vouch for this fact, — that a magnetizer can strongly affect a person who is not only in another room, or another house, or many hundred yards off, but who is utterly unaware that any thing is to be done."

Dr. Foissac magnetized Paul Villagrand at the distance of three hundred miles. The doctor gave a note to his father, which he desired him to hand to Paul at half-past five, P.M. It read thus, "I am magnetizing you at this moment: I will awake you when you have had a quarter of an hour's sleep." But the father, to make the experiment decisive, never gave the letter to his son. "Nevertheless, at ten minutes before six, Paul, being in the midst of his family, experienced a sensation of heat, and considerable uneasiness. His shirt was wet through with perspiration; he wished to retire to his room: but they detained him. In a few minutes, he was entranced. In this state, he astonished the persons present, by reading, with his eyes shut, several lines of a book taken at hazard from the library, and by telling the hour upon a watch they held to him. He awoke in a quarter of an hour."

If the spirit while in the body can influence the spirits of others in the body, at a distance of hundreds of miles, it is surely not unreasonable to suppose, that, when the spirit has dropped the body, it can still influence them, and thus reveal its existence. Besides this, we have abundant evidence that the spirit does communicate with the living, thus establishing the third fundamental principle of Spiritualism.

On this subject we have the testimony of all ages. The sacred books of the Jews and Christians contain such accounts; and, although the fabulous character of

portions of the Bible leads to suspicion of all its marvellous statements, yet many of its accounts of spiritual manifestations are in harmony with those of other peoples and all time.

It is noticeable, that, as people have become more intelligent, spiritual manifestations have increased in the same proportion. As chemistry became established, alchemy died out; as astronomy advanced, astrology retreated, and hides to-day only in the obscurest corners: but as a knowledge of man's true nature increases, so do the evidences of communication between the spirit-world and our own multiply around us. In the early history of the Jews, we find but few of them; they were more common in the time of Jesus and his immediate followers, and are most common in this the most intelligent age the world has seen.

In bringing forward testimony on this subject, the only difficulty is to choose out of the abundance presented. Do we desire the testimony of a scientific man, let us take that of Prof. Hare, the well-known chemist, who at one time maintained most earnestly the mechanical theory of Faraday, but abandoned it in consequence of the experiments undertaken to demonstrate it. He visited a medium, through whom communications were received by the tipping of a table. The alphabet was placed upon a table, and, when a pencil held by a gentleman at the foot of the table passed over it, the table tipped when the right letter was indicated. In this way, this message was spelled out, "Light is dawning on the mind of your friend; soon he will speak trumpet-tongued to the scientific world, and add a new link to that chain of evidence on which our hope of man's salvation is founded."

This appeared to him almost unaccountable; but he was resolved to prevent the possibility of deception. He made a disk of pasteboard about a foot in diameter, around which the letters of the alphabet were placed as much as possible out of their regular order. The disk was made to revolve upon an axis by a string which passed over a groove in the hub of the wheel; a weight being attached to each end of the string, — a large one on the ground, and a smaller suspended on the other side of the wheel. The medium was seated at the table with a screen between her eyes and the disk. The table was tilted, and thus the disk, which was on the axle attached to it, was made to revolve, and the letters of the alphabet were brought under a stationary index before it. Prof. Hare sat in front of it, and said, "If there be a spirit present, let the letter *y* be brought under the index." The disk revolved to the letter *y*. But I will let him tell the story in his own words. "'Will the spirit be so kind as to give his initials?' It revolved immediately to R. and to H. 'What,' said I, 'my father?' It revolved again to the letter *y*, indicating the affirmative. 'Will you arrange these letters in alphabetical order?' The disk again moved; and the letters were arranged as requested. 'Will you now spell the name of Washington?' It was spelled. 'Now,' said a bystander, 'you must give up. You made this instrument to disprove Spiritualism, and you see it confirms it.' I remarked that this was the most important experiment which I had ever performed, if viewed as proving that the shade of my honored father was there. I said, 'You must allow me time to deliberate, and to repeat the experiment, before ultimately deciding.'"

Subsequently he obtained analogous results by another medium, who had not previously seen his apparatus, and whom he had never seen before.

It was suggested that the medium might be clairvoyant, and thus see through the disk. To obviate this objection, Prof. Hare procured a brass ball, something like a billiard-ball, and placed upon it a smooth plate of metal on which the hands of the medium rested, so that she could not possibly control the movements of the table. His father communicating with him under these circumstances, the name of an uncle of his, who was killed by the Arabs seventy years ago, was spelled out. "Also the name of a partner who came out and took care of his affairs during the Revolution," nobody present knowing the name but himself. Then the names of some English relatives were given, the name of an aunt who died forty years ago, and the name of his English grandfather's partner. Cards were held up; and the spirits accurately described them when neither the medium nor himself knew what they were. Sitting with a medium who was not a Latin scholar, he asked his father to point out the words in Virgil which he admired as describing the beating which Entellus gave Dares; and he spelled out the words, "*pulsatque versatque.*"

No wonder that Prof. Hare became a Spiritualist, and announced it to the world, after such demonstrative tests as these; and so, I think, would every other scientist, had he an equal determination to know the truth, and as much courage to avow it.

Do we desire the testimony of a literary man, here is that of William Howitt, whose reputation is world-wide.

"More than six years ago, I began to examine the phenomena of Spiritualism. I did not go to paid or even to public mediums. I sat down at my own table with members of my own family, or with friends,—persons of high character, and serious as myself in the inquiry. I saw tables moved, rocked to and fro, and raised repeatedly into the air. I heard the raps, sometimes a hundred at once, in every imaginable part of the table, in all keys, and of various degrees of loudness. I examined the phenomena thoroughly. Silly but playful spirits came frequently. I heard accordions play wonderful music as they were held in one hand, often by a person who could not play at all. I heard and saw hand-bells carried about the room in the air; put first into one person's hand, and then into another's; taken away again by a strong pull, though you could not see the hand touching them. . . . As for communications professedly from spirits, they were of daily occurrence, and often wonderful. Our previous theological opinions were resisted and condemned when I and my wife were alone.

"I have seen spirit-hands moving about; I have felt them again and again. I have seen writing done by spirits, by laying a pencil and paper in the middle of the floor, and very good sense written too.

"I could give you a whole volume of the remarkable and even startling revelations made by our own departed friends at our own evening table; those friends coming at wholly unexpected times, and bringing messages of the most vital importance; carrying them on from period to period, sometimes at intervals of years, into a perfect history. But these things are too sacred for the public eye."

The testimony of Dr. Ashburner, a well-known London physician, is very satisfactory. "I have myself so often witnessed spiritual manifestations, that I could not, if I were inclined, put aside the evidences which have come before me. When Mr. Charles Foster was in London in 1863, he was often in my house; and numerous friends had opportunities of witnessing the phenomena which occurred in his presence. The second morning that he called on me was about two weeks after his arrival in England. Accidentally, at the same time arrived at my door, Lady C. H. and her aunt, wife of the Rev. A. E. I urged them to come in, and placed them on chairs at the sides of my dining-table. Their names had not been mentioned; Mr. Foster having retired to the farther extremity of the room, so as not to be able to see what the ladies wrote, I induced them each to write, upon separate slips of paper, six names of friends who had departed this world. These they folded into pellets, which were placed together.

"Mr. Foster, coming back to the table, immediately picked up a pellet, and addressing himself to Mrs. A. E., 'Alice,' he said, which made the lady start, and ask how he knew her name. He replied, 'Your cousin, John Whitney, whose name you wrote in that little piece of paper, stands by your side, and desires me to say, that he often watches over you, and reads your thoughts, which are always pure and good. He is delighted at the tenderness and care which you exhibit in the education of your children.' Then he turned towards me, and said, 'Alice's uncle is smiling benignantly as he is looking towards you. He says you and he were very intimate friends.' I said, 'I should like to know the name of my friend;' and Mr. Foster

instantly replied, 'Gaven. His Christian name will appear on my right arm.'

"The arm was bared; and there appeared in red letters, fully one inch and a quarter long, the name William, raised on the skin of his arm. Certainly, William Gaven was my dear old friend, and the uncle of the lady whose name is Alice.

"Mr. Foster next addressed himself to Lady C., whom he had never seen before in his life. 'Your mother,' said he, 'the Marchioness of ——, stands by your side, and desires to give you her fond blessing and very affectionate love.' He added, 'Lady C., you wrote on a piece of paper I hold here the name of Miss Stuart. She stands by the side of your mother, and is beaming with delight at the sight of her pupil. She was your governess, and was much attached to you.' He added, 'That charming person, the marchioness, was a great friend of the doctor's. She is so pleased to find you all here! Her Christian name is to appear on my arm.' Mr. Foster drew up his sleeve, and there appeared in raised, red letters on the skin, the name Barbara." Dr. Ashburner adds, "Here were cases in which it was quite impossible that the medium could have known any single fact relating to the families, or to the intimacies, of any of the persons present. I had myself formed his acquaintance only two days before; and the ladies had arrived from a part of the country with which he could not possibly be acquainted."

If it is said that this might be accomplished by mind-reading, then the question arises, How does it happen that the medium has no knowledge of this? Can this, the most wonderful of all powers, be exer-

cised unconsciously ? And why are such manifestations invariably attributed to spirits by the manifestations themselves ? Do mediums not only unconsciously read mind, move physical bodies, and write messages, but at the same time unconsciously lie regarding the cause of these varied phenomena ?

My own spiritual experience has been much like that of William Howitt. I commenced the investigation of Spiritualism at home, with the members of our own family ; when we had raps, movement of tables, and, by these means, communications from unseen intelligences professing to be our departed friends, and giving us satisfactory evidence of this. After this, I saw remarkable physical manifestations through mediums in Ohio, Indiana, New York, and Canada, — such as the elevation of heavy tables and other bodies when no person was in contact with them, the rooms in which these took place being at the time well lighted. I have seen hands repeatedly, and felt them still more often, when the hands of the only person in the room beside myself lay upon the table before me ; and this frequently in the broad daylight also. I have induced spirits to make for me impressions of their hands on plastic substances, such as putty and clay, and to draw their outlines with pencil on paper, which they have done repeatedly in my presence in a well-lighted room. On one occasion, I received in this way the outline of a hand larger than I ever saw ; when the only person present beside myself was a lady of average size, and both her hands at the time were on the table before me.

I have frequently received communications in writing both on slate and paper ; and in all cases this took

place in the daytime, or in a lighted room, and under circumstances that rendered it utterly impossible for any person in the body to produce them. I desire no more evidence than I have had on this subject; for it leaves no room for question or doubt.

Those who can be satisfied by testimony upon this subject may certainly obtain all that is needed. If they desire personal experience, they need not go far to obtain that also, and know for themselves that Spiritualism is true, and rejoice in a knowledge of the most glorious gospel that was ever preached to mankind.

Our graveyards are not the dwelling-places of the departed; nor are their coffins the bedrooms in which they are to sleep till a trumpet-blast shall wake the dust, and call it forth to life again. There we lay away the shards, the cast-off cases of humanity, while the friends we mourn are sadly smiling at our sorrow, and longing to enlighten us, and bear up the load that presses the mourner's spirit down.

What we call death is but an epoch in the soul's history. Life here is the first act in the great drama of existence; and the curtain only falls to rise again, and show us a fairer scene, and introduce us to a better life. We mourn not the departure of our friends as those who are agonized with doubt as to whether they have gone to a heaven of pious bliss or a hell of abysmal despair; nor do we mourn as those who believe they are asleep, and that only a miracle can awake them. There is no gulf between us and them, that needs to be bridged; no wall that needs to be scaled; no vigilant gate-keepers to be eluded. In sorrow they are near to cheer us, in danger to warn, in temptation to strengthen. No selfish enjoyment eclipses their

love or weakens their affection, and as surely as we part we shall meet again.

Tell it to the ocean, and let his deep voice repeat it to the thousand islands that lie upon his broad breast; tell it to the winds, and let its glad tidings be carried on their wings over the wide continents, and let earth's millions join in one grand hymn of praise.

Let the mourner's tears be dried, and bid the orphan smile: death is no longer man's enemy; by the angel of Spiritualism he swears eternal friendship to mankind.

Do I, then, indorse all that professes to come from the spirit-world? By no means. Some things attributed to this source are doubtless produced by fraud; though by no means as much as some would have us believe. The charge of fraud has been made against some of the best people that ever lived; and some timid ones have been broken down by it, who were as true and pure as Nature herself. Some phenomena attributed to spirits outside of the body are in reality produced by spirits still remaining in the body. These spirits, that are to do such wonderful things when they have left the body, possess the power, to a certain extent, now, and frequently exercise it; and multitudes innocently, because ignorantly, attribute to spirits what has no other source than themselves, it may be, in a peculiar condition.

Nor do I indorse as good or true all that in reality comes from the spirit-world. We are spirits incased in clay: they are spirits who have dropped the case, but, in other respects, are identically the same. Every second a human being becomes a spirit; and the spirit-world cannot but abound with ignorant, vicious, un-

developed spirits. Shall we submit to their dictation? Shall we give ourselves up to their influence regardless of their character? The consequences might be, as they have frequently been, most disastrous. We must stand by our own sense of what is true, right, and pure, and never move a step without good reason.

Prove to us that you are in communication with Franklin, Channing, Parker, George Fox, or Jesus, what then? We must still take what they say for what it seems to us to be worth when weighed in the scale of our judgment; for, if God spoke, we could do no other. Herein differs modern from ancient Spiritualism. Ancient Spiritualism — that which the Christian Church believes in and indorses to-day — overpowers the individual soul, robs it of its heritage, sets a master over it who graciously permits it to echo his voice. But we have learned that a man's soul is to him the highest tribunal in the universe; by that he must stand first, last, and always. All revelations must appeal to that, and nothing be accepted that it rejects; each for himself, making daily the heaven that he desires, and bearing it with him to the land of souls, whither Time bears us with rapid strides.

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